

Attachment A
Family Letters in Support

November 14, 2012

Office of Federal Public Defender
Honorable Henry E. Hudson, United States District Judge
C/O Elizabeth W. Hanes, Assistant Federal Public Defender
701 East Broad Street, Suite 3600
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Honorable Henry E. Hudson,

My name is John McGahan President/CEO of Gavin Foundation, Inc. which provides alcohol and other drug education, prevention, treatment and recovery support services. I am Joshua's uncle and as you can imagine my relationship with Joshua has been intermittent due to his inability to remain substance free. However, our relationship has always been open, honest and respectful. I feel in a good position to speak of his character.

As someone who works in the field of behavioral health/addiction I am often asked to write character letter for clients who are involved in the criminal justice system and by far this is the most difficult one I have every had to do as I write this not as a professional.

It is my hope that Joshua and his father never see this letter but I think it's important for you to see the whole picture. Joshua's parents were kids when that had him and he became the victim of their bitter divorce. He was spoiled as a youngster as they tried to top each other with gifts, trips, etc. They fought over custody when he was young. My brother fought very hard and lost every time because the court wanted to keep him with his mother. I believe Josh wanted to stay with his mother because my brother offered discipline along with love. I also believe Josh wanted to stay with his mom because she was in and out of relationships and battled her own alcoholic demons – he needed to protect her and his siblings. I know that they both loved him very much but like a lot of kids Joshua learned how to survive this situation by self-medicating. In hindsight, I regret not taking a more active role in his childhood.

Over the years Joshua has had his issues but you can rest assure that he has always accepted responsibility for his behavior. He is at heart a kid who loves his family and has struggled to find his place. He always attends family events and never leaves without saying goodbye with a hug or a handshake. Josh has had limited earning capacity yet he never ask for anything and has always been trustworthy. In spite of his financial situation you could see the joy he gets in giving gifts to others during the holidays. He has been a good big brother to his siblings and stood by his mother despite her struggles, he is loyal and generous. I know some of his friends and they all say he will give you the shirt off his back. At times I wonder if this character trait has led him down the wrong path or to be taken advantage of because he so desperately seeks approval. In spite of the trauma he has suffered, I have never known Joshua to ever be violent or even speak ill of others. These are just some of the good character traits Joshua possesses.

As a treatment provider, I did assist Joshua with admission to the Gavin House but at that time I was operating a sister property and was not part of the team that provided him with treatment. Therefore, the only knowledge I have on his stay was that he did in fact complete the program and remain substance free during that time and for a period of time upon completion.

I know Joshua broke the law and must take responsibility for his actions. However, Joshua's youth, educational opportunities, and sports were lost to a stressful home life, his early adulthood to addiction and behavioral health issues. Please consider these facts when deciding Joshua's fate. I hope you see the good in him as I do and can find it in your heart to show him some leniency because he can be a productive member of society. I know he is now looking forward to taking advantage of the educational and behavioral health programs the systems has to offer so he can once again be a man of dignity and honor.

Respectfully,


John P. McGahan

November 15, 2012

Honorable Henry E. Hudson
United States District Judge
c/o Elizabeth W. Hanes
Assistant Federal Public Defender
Office of the Federal Public Defender
701 East Broad Street
Suite 3600
Richmond, Virginia 23219

Re: Joshua McGahan

Dear Your Honor:

My name is Mary McGahan and live in Concord, New Hampshire. I currently work for the Harris Hill Center in Concord. I had worked for the New Hampshire Public Defender Program for about five years and the Merrimack County Superior Court for eleven plus years. I am Joshua's Aunt and have know Joshua since the day he was born to my brother James McGahan and his deceased ex-wife Laurie.

Joshua was a beautiful child loved by both his very young parents, two sets of grandparents, many aunts, uncles, cousins and great grandmother. Unfortunately he became the child of divorced parents who both loved him very much but who I think were to young and immature to keep him out of their differences. They both gave Josh their love but also to much for a young child to deal with. Both parents over time remarried but Josh was still in the middle of their battles. Josh's mother had to additional sons who shared their home. His mother had her own demons to deal with and I think Josh tried to do the best he could with his two younger brothers. My brother also had another son whom Josh was close to.

Josh was a very kind, caring and loving boy growing up. He was very close to both sets of grandparents especially his maternal grandmother and his paternal grandfather who he lost at around the age of ten. I have often thought if my dad had lived longer Josh would have gone down a different path.

I sincerely believe that Joshua has a disease that is hereditary and unfortunately has not been able to overcome it. I also realize he has broken the law and needs to be punished. However, I ask this court to believe that he is someone who could become an asset to society. I know he has it in his heart to become the man his grandfatherer and the rest of his family believe he can be. I pray that you find it in your heart to help him get the tools he needs to accomplish this.

If there is anymore information or anything else I can do, please contact me.